

## THOSE PARIS MADE DIAMONDS

EXPERIENCE THAT COST SIR JULIUS WERNER \$320,000.

The South African Diamond Magnate and the French Engineer Who Pretended He Could Make Diamonds—Details of the Case That Excites Paris.

LONDON, Jan. 23.—What looks like one of the biggest swindles of recent years is now being investigated in Paris—the Lemoine diamond making scheme. Some particulars of the story have already been given in THE SUN, but it is worthy of a more detailed account.

It is no case of selling a gold brick to a hawkeye. The alleged swindler, a French engineer named Lemoine, has been trying to sell the secret of how to make diamonds to no less a person than Sir Julius Wernher, president of the De Beers Company.

The price was to be the nice round sum of \$200,000, and the South African magnate has already parted with \$30,000 in advances for building and experimental purposes. He now charges Lemoine with swindling him, and is suing him for the third part of the money advanced, admitting that he is willing to let the other two-thirds go as the price of his own credulity.

The Parisian public has taken the matter up in truly Parisian fashion. So complex has the inquiry become that the friends of M. le Procureur, the judge d'instruction who has charge of the case, are already beginning to fear for his health. The newspapers, of course, have already taken sides, and Lemoine and anti-Lemoine discuss the affair with Gallic extensibility.

Lemoine, the hero of the story, is a fairly tall, well set up man, who impresses the looker-on as being quite out of the common run, whether or not he has discovered how to make diamonds.

A perfect man of the world, having an open face with regular features, a square black beard, and eyes shining with energy, is the description one spectator gives of the man who has persuaded many that he can make diamonds.

Lemoine gives the following account of his dealings with Sir Julius Wernher. He pretends to have perfected a new method of making diamonds. Not having sufficient funds to pursue his work properly, he secured in 1904 an introduction to Wernher, who went to Paris three years ago to see some experiments.

These were so successful that Wernher entered into a contract with him and supplied funds for the construction of a big workshop and the remuneration of the inventor, who retained the right of using the funds to pursue his work properly. Various details were subsequently signed, Sir Julius promising not to endeavor to fathom the secret.

The explanation of the secret, the formula of the now famous black powder, was placed in an envelope, which was then sealed and deposited in a safe at the Union Bank in London. The conflict just now is raging around this envelope. Sir Julius demands that it be produced, declaring that it will be found to contain only a blank sheet of paper. Lemoine's counsel, Maître-Lafont, of Dreyfus trial fame, protests against the production of the envelope, as it would give away his client's secrets with all its potentialities of wealth.

If the envelope were in France, the judge d'instruction would have the power to order its production. But the law is different in England, and it seems unlikely that the bank will deliver it to any one without the consent of Lemoine.

The experiments which Lemoine performed for Sir Julius Wernher and which he has performed for others may best be described in the words of Lord Armstrong, one of the principals of the great Newcastle firm, who is a firm believer in the diamond making scheme. "Lemoine does not believe at all," he says, "that he has been in Lemoine's laboratory in the Rue Lavoisier in Paris and is 'fully satisfied that Lemoine has discovered the philosopher's stone.' 'Like St. Thomas,' Lord Armstrong proceeds, 'I only believe in what I have seen and touched, and I have now the absolute conviction that M. Lemoine is a genius, and that what he asserts is correct.'"

"M. Lemoine handed me a powder, which in order to convince myself I worked up with my fingers. It was nothing but a powder. 'I myself put this powder into an empty crucible, which I closed again, and personally put the crucible into the furnace. When, under the instruction of M. Lemoine, who stood some distance from me and could in no way interfere in the operation, I withdrew the crucible I found in it an agglomerated mass, which I allowed to cool before my eyes.'"

"I myself broke this shapeless mass, which presented the appearance of carbonized matter, and there I found these pure diamonds and these other diamonds less perfect."

Lord Armstrong brought out of his safe an envelope from which some fifty little brilliant stones slipped and scintillated in the sunlight. These diamonds, the judge said, were not here at all; he says that he has been in Lemoine's laboratory in the Rue Lavoisier in Paris and is 'fully satisfied that Lemoine has discovered the philosopher's stone.'"

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occurred a short circuit which operated on sand, and consequently produced a molten, brittle mass resembling glass. This object lesson led to Koechlin manufacturing by a similar method some body other than natural diamonds, and which might replace diamond dust, now extensively used by diamond cutters. He was seeking capital to help him in his enterprise, and made the acquaintance of Lemoine.

At this period, in 1898, Lemoine was employed as canvasser by a firm of advertising agents in the Rue Drouot. Lemoine talked very glibly, and announced that he was a student of chemistry and that he had followed the discoveries of Prof. Moissan with the greatest interest.

To procure the necessary capital to assist Koechlin he induced three tradesmen to take shares with him and provide small sums of money. A contract was drawn up between the parties and an experiment was carried out by M. Koechlin in a small laboratory at Lemoine's.

"We succeeded," said the engineer, "in obtaining the brittle powder, which while it was harder than rubies was without the hardness of the diamond."

Several other experiments were made with similar substances. A portion of the powder thus obtained was shown to Prof. Moissan, who declared that it was softer than natural diamond dust.

After this some friends of Koechlin warned him to be careful of Lemoine, as he was playing a double game, and was seeking to make himself master of the formula used by Koechlin. The latter discovered about this time that Lemoine was a bluff and knew next to nothing about the science of chemistry, so their business relations were broken off.

"I am certain," said the engineer in court, "that he has stolen my formula and that it is this he has been utilizing in the experiments which he has carried out in the presence of Sir Julius Wernher and Lord Armstrong. I am convinced that the man has no secret process that is his own."

At present the efforts to renew his diamond making experiments in the presence of fresh experts, but only on condition that he be released on bail. But Sir Julius Wernher opposes bail being granted, and the magistrate supports him. Lemoine therefore makes a fresh challenge in these terms:

"I undertake to sell all my goods and chattels and property whatsoever and to deposit the proceeds in a bank chosen by Sir Julius. I will add thereto 500,000 francs of shares in my electric factory at Argenteuil in the Pyrenees and 150,000 francs more of shares in another concern which I have in which with Mr. Jackson, who represents a rival undertaking to the De Beers."

"All this shall be held as bail by Sir Julius Wernher, who must then agree to my release, when I will renew my experiments. If these succeed Sir Julius shall return me my surety, plus damages to compensate me for the publication of my secret, the sum to be fixed by the courts. If I fail Sir Julius will, I am sure, enter into possession of everything I have in the world, and furthermore he will be free to sue me for damages."

Sir Julius refuses to do anything more than deposit \$80,000, which Lemoine may have used in his experiments, and that when he entered into his contract with Lemoine the experiments he had witnessed seemed conclusive and above all suspicion. As the owner of one of the most important diamond mining companies he could not help taking an interest in a discovery which might have an important bearing on the diamond market.

His idea, he says, was to sacrifice a comparatively small sum, for him, in order to see whether Lemoine's process could be of any damaging effect on the production of natural diamonds. His contract stipulated that all the artificially produced diamonds were to be handed over to him. He

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It was some time before he had any suspicions of Lemoine. But when the latter failed to deliver any more diamonds, but continued to ask for more money, Sir Julius apparently began to have suspicions. He had an expert named Hoats over from the Cape.

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## TOOK HER HUSBAND'S PULPIT.

The Rev. Mrs. Varney Successful as Pastor of a Michigan Church.

The Rev. Mrs. Mecca Varney is the pastor of Christ Church, Paw Paw, Mich., and is said to have increased the membership one-third since taking charge last October. Last summer the Rev. Dr. Charles E. Varney with his wife, the Rev. Mrs. Mecca Varney, was spending the summer at Eagle Lake when he was invited to fill the pulpit of Christ Church. When the time came for Dr. Varney to resume his lecture work his wife was asked to become pastor of the church.

She began the work October 1. A rally day was held the first Sunday in the year and revealed the fact that the church is growing with amazing rapidity, the Sunday school has the largest attendance in its history and the Junior and Christian Endeavor societies are the best in the county. At Christmas one of the presents given to Mrs. Varney for the church was a bouquet made of white paper flowers with dollar bills for leaves. It represented the contribution of one Sunday school class and amounted to just \$27. Other classes presented similar though smaller bouquets.

## TRYING IT ON THE DOG.

Preliminary Canters for the Syracuse Students of Education.

An innovation in the department of education at Syracuse University is to be tried. The students are to get what is called laboratory work.

They will be lent out to any function in towns near by where the entertainment committee feels the need of a speaker. In three ways it is estimated that this will work out well. The needs of the small towns will be supplied, the students will get much needed practice and the name and influence of Syracuse will be spread. Just how the persons who attend the functions to be entertained will regard it the department of education at Syracuse does not attempt to say.

## GREAT HERD OF CARIBOU.

Moving Southward in the Yukon—Said to Number Half a Million.

Dawson correspondence Tacoma Ledger. The greatest herd of caribou ever reported in the Yukon is now reported moving southward across the head of Sixty Mile River, 100 miles west of Dawson.

The herd has been crossing there for nearly thirty days. It is estimated that 200,000 caribou have crossed already. The end of the mammoth procession is not in sight. There may be half a million or even a larger number in the great moving herd.

Government explorers in the Hudson Bay barren lands, including Joseph B. Tyrrell, geologist, reported one or two million caribou seen there during a space of ten days only a few years ago. The present herd is coming from the head of the Tanana Valley and passing into the great unexplored region lying between White and Copper rivers.

Miners from Klondike, Forty Mile and other camps are rushing to Sixty Mile to see the mammoth herd pass and enjoy the shooting.

Two years ago a smaller herd passed through the Tanana district. Standing in their cabins many miners then killed an entire year's supply of fresh meat.

## His Ready Answer.

From the Washington Star.

"Alert?" said Senator Hopkins of a colleague the other day. "Why, he is as